



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ALIEN HARBORERS SENTENCED TO 71 MONTHS IN PRISON

PHOENIX—Luis Morales-Martinez, 24, and Rodrigo Casimiro-Lopez, 23, both of Mexico, were each sentenced to 71 months in prison by U.S. District Judge Neil V. Wake. Both defendants pleaded guilty without a plea agreement on April 1, 2008, to a charge of harboring illegal aliens.

The evidence introduced at a federal court hearing showed that on August 21, 2007, Morales-Martinez and Casimiro-Lopez were working with other individuals to conceal and harbor approximately 60 illegal aliens at a house on North 37th Place in Phoenix. Following that hearing, Judge Wake imposed sentencing enhancements for the number of illegal aliens harbored, the brandishing of a firearm, holding illegal aliens against their will in exchange for payment, injury to one of the illegal aliens, and for harboring an minor who was not accompanied by a parent or grandparent.

The windows of the drop house were covered from the inside with sheets of plywood. Morales-Martinez threatened some of the illegal aliens with an AK-47 type assault rifle and Casimiro-Lopez beat and injured one of the illegal aliens after tying his hands behind his back and gagging him. They had also raised smuggling fees to approximately double what the illegal aliens originally agreed to pay after they arrived at the drop house in Phoenix.

The sentencing occurred on June 26, 2008. Co-defendant Juan Jose Hernandez-Pedro, AKA Sergio Rogriguez-Mendoza, was previously sentenced to 52 months in prison in the same case.

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The prosecution was handled by Joseph E. Koehler, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-07-981-PHX-NVW
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-170(Morales-Martinez et al)

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